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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 002786

SIPDIS

SOUTHCOR ALSO FOR POLAD  
WHA ALSO FOR USOAS  
S/CRS FOR MICHELLE SCHIMP  
TREASURY FOR MAUREEN WAFER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/06/2010

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: S/CRS DIRECTOR PASCUAL MEETS WITH CEP DG BERNARD

Classified By: Charge d'Affairs Timothy M. Carney for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary. S/CRS Director Ambassador Carlos Pascual met Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) Director General Jacques Bernard on November 3 in Port-au-Prince to assess progress toward organizing elections. Bernard reaffirmed that a first round on December 18 was still possible, though he allows for a first round as late as December 21. He warned that the electoral budget deficit was in the range of \$10 million. Ambassador Pascual stressed that Core Group members would need a detailed budget by mid-November in order to consider further funding. Bernard said Prime Minister Latortue had assured him that the State Commission on the Nationality of Candidates (CENC) would release information to the CEP allowing it to publish a final list of presidential candidates, excluding dual-nationals Dumarsais Simeus and Samir Mourra, by November 4. In a later with Ambassador Pascual, however, the PM backed away from that commitment. (Note: The PM finally informed Charge d'Affairs Carney on November 6 that the IGOH would take the necessary steps to allow the CEP to publish the final Presidential list by November 8. Post will report fully septel. End Note.) Ambassador Pascual pledged to Bernard full USG support for his efforts  
End Summary.

12. (C) CEP DG Jacques Bernard admitted to Ambassador Pascual that he faced an enormous task and still encountered resistance and inefficiency within the CEP. However, he still believed he would be able to organize the first round of elections within a window of December 18-21. The Prime Minister had finally agreed to force the CENC to publish its findings that Dumarsais Simeus, Samir Mourra, and Joel Borgella were not qualified candidates, as they had not even bothered to submit their eligibility questionnaires to the CENC. As a result, Bernard hoped to issue the final list of presidential candidates by November 4. (Note: The PM later told Ambassador Pascual that because of reservations expressed by the Minister of Justice, he could not yet make good on his commitment to Bernard. The PM finally reported to Charge Carney on November 6 that the CENC would submit its findings to the CEP, allowing it to issue the final presidential list. He insisted that exclusions would be made on the basis of proven dual-nationality, not failure to submit the questionnaire. (Septel) End Note.)

13. (C) Bernard clarified the status of his own official authority: the cabinet had formally reduced the role of the electoral support committee from decision-making to consultative -- though support committee chairman Danielle Magloire denies the cabinet took this step -- but neither the cabinet nor the CEP had yet to formally approve his increased authority. (Note: support committee members formally submitted their resignations on November 7, thereby dissolving the body. End Note.) The PM had pledged to Bernard that he would organize a meeting at which the President presided and both the IGOH and the CEP would formally approve new CEP by-laws that established Bernard's authority. In the meantime, Bernard reaffirmed that he had the support of six of the nine CEP members. He planned to overcome some of the resistance by sending Pierre-Richard Duchemin, the CEP member who most challenged his authority, to Mexico to oversee the production of identification cards.

14. (C) Bernard said that his greatest concern regarding logistics remained ballot printing. He had arranged for CEP and OAS staff to travel to the printers in the Dominican Republic to oversee quality control and the sorting of ballot packages for the different departments. Bernard expressed concern that the printing company, Digimarc, was not meeting its contractual obligations to deliver all of the identification cards to registered voters, and thanked Ambassador Pascual for USG efforts to pressure the firm. He did not believe, however, that lack of cards should delay the elections, and had contingency plans in place to allow voters to vote with only their registration receipt.

15. (SBU) On the positive side, Bernard detailed how he had integrated MINUSTAH and CEP technical staff under his own

direction, and now held daily senior staff meetings. Bernard was confident that he could move quickly to set up 835 voting centers MINUSTAH had identified -- though he expressed reservations about the decision to decrease the number of urban centers in favor of rural centers -- and had in place a system to recruit and train voting center staff.

16. (C) Asked by Ambassador Pascual what the U.S. could do to further support the electoral process, Bernard warned that he estimated that the electoral budget deficit now stood between \$10-\$12 million. Ambassador Pascual advised Bernard that the CEP must produce a detailed budget to have any hope of successfully soliciting donors. Ambassador Pascual suggested that Bernard produce a budget by mid-November so that the Core Group could address the deficit before the Christmas holidays. Citing his banking background, Bernard expressed confidence he could do so, adding that budgets MINUSTAH had prepared previously had failed to account for variables or include contingency planning. Bernard also asked for U.S. support in convincing the Prime Minister to offer more public support to CEP members, and to have the PM and the cabinet help publicize the elections as they traveled around the country. The Prime Minister later agreed to take both steps during his following meeting with Ambassador Pascual (septel).

Comment

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17. (C) Bernard's evident professionalism, political savvy, and managerial expertise are heartening. It is increasingly clear that holding to first round of elections before Christmas depends on Bernard's ability to control and direct both Haitian and international electoral expertise and resources. Over the past two weeks Bernard has downplayed the importance of having by-laws in place that cement his own authority, focusing instead on neutralizing the electoral support committee and building personal relationships with individual CEP members. Under pointed questions from Ambassador Pascual, however, Bernard for the first time admitted that he now needs his authority formally approved by the CEP and the government. Post will, as the week progresses, hold the PM and the IGOH to the commitments they have made to Bernard and the international community.

CARNEY